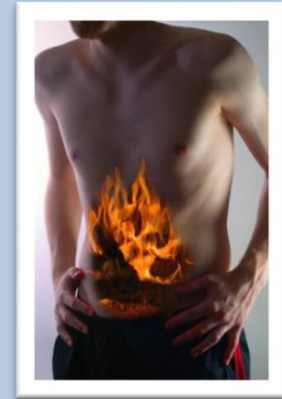


Acupuncture and IBS

Irritable Bowel Syndrome is a complex disorder in which the intestines lose their ability to efficiently move their contents. The main symptoms of IBS are abdominal pain, bloating diarrhea and/or constipation. Less common symptoms may include headaches, fatigue, depression and anxiety. Symptoms may be triggered by stress, diet, emotional factors, hormone levels and medications.

Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) offer a safe, effective, natural, and drug-free way to address IBS. This holistic healthcare system looks at the body differently than Western Medicine. According to the theories and philosophies of acupuncture and Chinese Medicine, IBS is caused by an imbalance of Qi and blood affecting one or more of the organ systems:



Spleen Organ System- The spleen is the organ in charge of digestion and assimilation of foods and liquids. One of the main functions of the spleen is to aid in the production of spleen Qi. Spleen Qi is the energy that provides power and nourishment for the entire body. Another function of the spleen is to produce blood from the food it breaks down and to convert it into usable energy to power your body. If your spleen isn't properly cared for, the body's energy levels will not be supported and illness may occur.

The spleen is easily affected and weakened by poor eating habits and diet, antibiotics, excessive worry, or a weak constitution. When a weakened spleen cannot metabolize or process food efficiently, "dampness" appears in the body. Dampness occurs when rotting, undigested food sits in the gut, causing a variety of symptoms. If dampness "rises" to your head, you may experience headaches, a "foggy" feeling and an inability to concentrate. Over time, dampness can lead to bloating, fullness and loose stools.

Liver Organ System- Another possibility is an imbalance in the liver. According to Chinese Medicine, the liver is associated with emotional health. Stress and anger directly influence the function of your liver. Alcohol, drugs and medication or a poor diet further compromise its function. When this happens, your liver energy "overflows" and attacks the spleen. If your spleen is already weakened, it can be easily overcome. The result can be stress-induced IBS. If your liver is compromised, you may experience alternating diarrhea and constipation, as well as bloating, gas, headaches, and dull pain. In this case, your liver may be the root of the problem and your spleen the secondary problem.

Kidney Organ System- An imbalance in kidney yang could also cause IBS symptoms. Kidney Yang is energy that provides warmth for your body. This energy warms your spleen to aid in the digestion and breakdown of food. If your kidney energies are compromised, you may experience early-morning diarrhea and possible bladder incontinence, cold limbs, weak knees, and a sore back.

Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine can create a clear picture of the root imbalances that lead to IBS symptoms and can provide a safe, natural, drug-free and effective way to address IBS.